(b) if so, the steps taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) The Government has expressed its intention to improve relations with all friendly countries, including the US.

(b) The Government is engaged in wide ranging dialogue with the US Government. The two Governments have agreed to work purposefully, towards developing a broad-based relationship and intensifying mutually beneficial cooperation.

Extradition Treaty with U.A.E.

335. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government have recently signed Extradition Treaty with the United Arab Emirates and if so, the details thereof; and

(b) What are the number of suspected criminals likely to be extradited from U.A.E. as a result of the said Treaty?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Madam. The Extraditon Treaty between Indian and the United Arab Emirates was signed on 25.10.99. The main features of the Treaty are as follows:

(i) The Extradition Treaty provides a legal framework for seeking the extradition of fugitive criminals including those involved in terrorism and economic offences from either country. Under the Treaty, extradition would be possible whether the crime was committed before or after the entry into force of this Treaty.

(ii) The persons accused of an offence punishable by imprisonment for a period of at least one year or more can be extradited.

(iii) An attempt or conspiracy to commit or incite or participate in the commission of an extraditable offence shall also be regarded as an extraditable offence.

(iv) The nationals of the Contracting States shall not be extradited to the other Contracting State and the Requested State shall submit the case to its competent authorities for prosecution.

(v) The Treaty provides that extradition shall not be granted if the offence for which extradition is requested is a political offence. Offences that fall within the scope of an international convention to which both India and UAE are parties shall not be regarded as political offences. Moreover, the Treaty also lists other offences that shall not be regarded as political offences.

(b) Once the Treaty comes into force after it is ratified by both the Contracting States and the instruments of ratification are exchanged, the Government would forward extradition requests to the U.A.E. Government in as many cases as required.

CIA's Planned Infiltration in Kargil

336. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Tribune dated May 28, 1999, captioned "CIA planned infiltration"; and

(b) if so, whether Government have since caused a probe into the likelihood of CIA's hand behind the massive infiltration in Kargil sector by Pak and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report does not quote any sources or, in any other way, corroborate the information. All matters relating to the intrusion in Kargil is the subject of a review by a Committee.

Indo-French Forum

337. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the decisions taken in the second meeting of Indo-French Forum;

(b) what are the areas in which we can benefit from the French experience and expertise;

(c) whether France has promised direct investment in any field; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) The Indo-French Forum, during its second meeting which was held on February 16 & 17, 1999 in New Delhi, made several recommendations for enhancing co-operation in various fields between India and France. The Forum identified the specific areas of water management, AIDS research, Space, information technology, transportation, Agriculture and food processing, culture, education and tourism for further co-operation between the two countries. The Forum also suggested that a meeting of Indian and French legal experts be organised, that an independent web site for the Indo-French Forum be set up and that an Indo-French Water Technology Week be arranged. Following the recommendations of the Forum, the Indo-French Forum web site has